**Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 11 December 2023 at Bradwell Village Hall, Church Road, Bradwell**

**Present:**

Cllr. Tony Dunn (Chair)

Cllr. Glenn Lockey (Deputy Chair)

Cllr. Adam Deighton

Cllr. Craig Evans

Cllr. Antony Harding

Cllr. Michael Turner

**In attendance:**

Mrs Nicki Watkins, Clerk & RFO

Three members of the public were in attendance.

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| **23-4/138** | **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**  The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed those present.  Apologies were received from Cllr. Kinder, Cllr. Playle and Cllr. Walsh. |
| **23-4/139** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**  Cllr. Turner declared an interest as a member of the Village Hall Management Committee with respect to Agenda item 23-4/153, D-Day 80 Commemorations and item 23-4/154, Bradwell Dog Show 2024. |
| **23-4/140** | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE OF MUTUAL INTEREST**  Nothing was raised by the residents attending the meeting. |
| **23-4/141** | **RESIDENTS’ PARISH MEETING**  The Chair reported that a meeting had been called by residents on 7 December 2023, regarding the outline planning permissions granted to McDonnell Mohan Ltd (the developer) for three and six dwellings on the Land to the South of Coggeshall Road (Rectory Meadow). He confirmed that this was not legally binding on the Parish Council and as a result of the meeting, two items required resolution: -  Firstly, the request for the Parish Council to set up and manage a fighting fund to pay the unavoidable cost of legal action to prevent the linear extension of Rectory Meadow. This would be funded by donations and not Parish Council funds.  Secondly, to ask the Parish Council to negotiate with the landowner to erect a waymarker at the start of PROW67-51; the waymarker to be set 2m from the fence. The footpath PROW67-51 to be marked with white paint to either side of the waymarker.  Ahead of discussing the resolutions, the Clerk reported that she had spoken to the EALC to ascertain what, if any, legal powers the Parish Council might use to support the residents. The Clerk wanted to read out the advice she had received:  “The dispute is one that relates to a planning application and, as such, the final decision resides with the District Council (namely Braintree District Council). The Parish Council would have had an opportunity at the time to comment on the planning application and raise any objections and any subsequent issue must therefore be followed up by the residents.  Given this was now a legal issue and not a Parish Council issue, the Parish Council were strongly advised against getting involved. However, if a Councillor wanted to independently offer support to the residents, he/she could do this as an individual, not in the capacity of a Councillor, as they have no authority. The Parish Council also had no authority or powers to support it spending residents’ money on offering financial support, therefore the final legal advice was that the Parish Council should not get involved. Councillors were reminded that anyone with a vested interest must declare this at any Parish Council meeting as a disclosable pecuniary interest, as failure to do so could lead to a Code of Conduct complaint”.  The Chair proposed that a working party be set up to look at what the Parish Council could do to assist the residents and working within the boundaries of having no legal powers. Cllrs. Lockey and Evans agreed to be part of the working party along with the Chair.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey; All in favour**  In relation to the second resolution, the Chair proposed he be given delegated authority to write to the Highways regarding erecting a waymarker.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey; All in favour**  Members received and considered the minutes of the Residents Parish meeting held on 7 December 2023 and resolved to approve them as a true record.  **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey; All in favour**  The minutes were signed by the Chair. |
| **23-4/142** | **COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**  Cllr. Playle was unable to attend the meeting but had sent an update on issues to the Clerk. These were read as follows:  **Essex County Council** was recently announced to receive an extra £121 million from central Government for highways repairs over the next 10 years. This is on top of its usual annual budget.  **County Council Boundary proposals**  The Local Government Boundary Commission has published draft proposals for new divisions for Essex County Council. This would take into account change in populations (75 to 78 councillors) and fluctuations in areas. These current proposals can be viewed and commented on by 19th February 2024. It is expected the final versions will be published in Summer 2024, in time for the next County elections in May 2025. |
| **23-4/143** | **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2023 – RESOLUTION**  Members received and considered the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13 November 2023 and resolved to approve them as a true record.  **Proposed: Cllr. Deighton; Seconded: Cllr. Harding; All in favour**  The minutes were signed by the Chair. |
| **23-4/144** | **UTILITIES CONTRACT**  At the November meeting (23-4/132), members had agreed to grant the Clerk delegated authority to approve and secure the contract offering the best value for money for its business energy services. The Clerk advised members that she had arranged a three-year deal taking effect from 1 February 2024 and had signed the confirmation contract on behalf of the Parish Council. A copy of the contract would be included with the Internal Audit. |
| **23-4/145** | **EMPLOYMENT/COMMITTEE NALC SALARIES – LGA COUNCIL STAFF PAY INCREAS 2023/24**  The Chair confirmed that pay scales for council staff had been agreed. As a result, backdated payments would be made to both the previous and current clerk, taking effect from 1 April 2023 and 1 October 2023 respectively.  The Clerk confirmed the pay increases were shown in the financial statements and November payments for approval, shown under agenda item 23-4/146. |
| **23-4/146** | **BUDGET 2024/25**  Members received and considered the draft budget for 2024/25. The Clerk was still awaiting details of the 24/25 precept but noted that the tax base had gone down slightly to 226.56 from 228.03.  The Chair noted that the figure on the draft budget sheet relating to the playing field should be removed as this had been budgeted to be completed and funded from the current year. The Clerk would also update the amount relating to hedgerow cutting which had been entered incorrectly.  The Chair noted that whilst the Parish Council had received three options of being able to claim the funds from Links Solar Farm once it had been completed, it had yet to discuss and decide. The Clerk would ask Zak Reid, Community Liaison & Stakeholder Manager from Low Carbon to prepare a draft contract for the Parish Council to consider, showing the third option (Index linked payments). Cllr. Lockey requested that the Clerk confirm with Mr Reid what would happen should any of the panels require replacing, and whether this would affect the payments.  The Clerk would update the budget spreadsheet and present it at the January 2024 meeting for discussion and with the aim of finalising it. |
| **23-4/147** | **FINANCIAL REPORTS**   1. **Members received and approved** the financial statements to 30 November 2023. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Lockey All in favour.**   1. **Members approved** payments for November 2023. There were no queries.   **Proposed: Cllr. Dunn; Seconded: Cllr. Evans; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/148** | **PLANNING MATTERS**  **New Applications**   1. **ESS/34/15/BTE/NMA9** -**:** **Land at Rivenhall Airfield, Coggeshall Road, Braintree, CO5 9DF** Non-Material Amendment to amend the wording of Condition 8 of planning permission ESS/34/15/BTE to allow the delivery and removal of abnormal indivisible loads associated with mobile cranes in connection with the construction the Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF). ESS/34/15/BTE is the planning permission for the IWMF. **No Comments** 2. **ESS/34/15/BTE/NMA8** -: **Land at Rivenhall Airfield, Coggeshall Road, Braintree, C05 9DF** Non-Material Amendment to amend the wording of Condition 35 of planning permission ESS/34/15/BTE to allow out of hours working between January 2024 and June 2024. ESS/34/15/BTE is the planning permission for the Integrated Waste Management Facility. **No Comments** 3. **23/01614/FUL -: Land Adjacent Hanwick Farm Hollies Road Bradwell Essex** Proposed new residential development comprising 7 no. new dwellings with new access from Hollies Road and associated development. **Comments were made by Cllr. Evans who wanted to record that there was no suitable footpath, which is of concern and considered hazardous and dangerous to current residents (and potentially any new residents). Additionally, the highway/road is not wide enough to accommodate additional motor vehicles. The Clerk would report comments back to Braintree District Council.** 4. **23/02776/HH** -: **Agers, Doghouse Road, Bradwell, Braintree, CM77 8BH** Single storey side extension & orangery rear extension **No Comments** |
| **23-4/149** | **PLAYING FIELD**   1. In Cllr. Kinder’s absence, the Clerk reported that there were no issues with the playing field.  Cllr. Lockey advised members that EHCountryside, who provide the grass cutting service to the parish, had advised him that, as part of their ongoing maintenance, they would be clearing the hedgerow from the pathways to enable emergency access. 2. The Clerk had contacted Playquip to determine when the repairs on the existing equipment would be undertaken. Playquip had said they had not received the e-mail from the previous clerk, instructing the work to go ahead. The Clerk had confirmed that the quote for repairs originally provided in August would remain in place until February 2024 and presented the figures that the previous clerk had provided relating to the installation of the equipment and the breakdown of cosets. Included in that figure was the quote for Rubber matting (Safety Surface), totalling £2,520.00. As the Chair could not recall the Parish Council approving this element of the quote (and given it was before the Clerk’s time in post), he asked for this to be added to the next agenda for discussion and for a decision to be made.  Cllrs. Turner and Deighton both reported that the top of the table tennis table had become water-damaged and therefore, before any adaptations could be made to it as part of the Playing Field project, it would have to be removed and replaced. Cllr. Evans suggested that the dimensions of the table be provided in order to consider obtaining quotes. Cllr. Deighton would provide these to be considered at a future meeting. Any work to the table tennis table would not impact the installation of the other equipment. 3. The Clerk had answered all follow-up requests from Braintree District Council and was awaiting approval of S106 funds for the new rotadisk roundabout. |
| **23-4/150** | **PARISH COUNCILS’S BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT & ACTION PLAN**  The Chair noted that Parish Councils were legally required to produce and publish a Biodiversity Statement by 1 January 2024. The Clerk had produced a statement and an action plan for the Parish Council based on the model statement suggested by the SLCC. There were no questions and members agreed to adopt the statement with immediate effect.  **Proposed: Cllr. Lockey; Seconded: Cllr. Deighton; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/151** | **FOOTPATHS**  There were no reports received on the footpaths this month. |
| **23-4/152** | **SALT BINS**  Cllr. Deighton confirmed that the saltbins had been placed in the approved areas and that they had been filled with salt/grit provided free of charge by Essex Highways.  The Clerk had completed the forms and follow-up questions for Essex County Council with regards to reclaiming the cost of the salt bins from the Locality Fund. She would follow-up this issue and copy in Cllr. Playle for his support to resolving this. |
| **24-4/153** | **D-DAY 80 COMMEMORATIONS**  Cllr. Turner was keen for the parish to mark the 80 years since the D-Day landings on 6 June 2024 and suggested celebrations might replicate previous celebrations along with the lighting of the beacon followed by some refreshments in the Village Hall or on the Playing Field. He proposed to discuss this with the Village Hall Management Committee and update the Parish Council at the next meeting, including whether the Village Hall might request a donation to assist in funding the event.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded: Cllr. Evans; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/154** | **BRADWELL DOG SHOW**  Cllr. Turner noted that the Bradwell Dog Show had been received favourably in previous years and had been very well attended by the residents who had also enjoyed refreshments in the Village Hall, the beer tent and BBQ. He proposed to discuss this with the Village Hall Management Committee and update the Parish Council at the next meeting, including whether the Village Hall might request a donation to assist in funding the event.  **Proposed: Cllr. Turner; Seconded: Cllr. Dunn; All in favour.** |
| **23-4/155** | **INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT/FUTURE MEETING(S)**  Members discussed the recent four-day disruption to the A120 (1 – 4 December) where it had been unclear what the actual issue had been. The general consensus appeared to be that this related to a burst water pipe by the BP garage, resulting in traffic being backed up to the Marks Farm roundabout. The problem appeared to be solved for the time being, although it was felt that this would be temporary.  The Clerk asked for feedback from the recent litter pick. The amenity vehicle had turned up on time and had been very well used by residents. The turnout for the actual litter pick had been disappointing but this might have been as a result of the cold weather and not being as well advertised as it could have been. The Clerk proposed to add this to the February agenda with a view to agreeing two dates for spring and autumn litter picks and to allow for better advertising. All agreed.     1. D-Day 80 Commemorations – request for grant/donation; 2. Bradwell Dog Show – update from Village Hall Management Committee and potential request for grant/donation; 3. Employment Committee Meeting – Clerk’s off probation appraisal. 4. Review of RoSPA report to see what was suggested with regards to rubber matting / safety surface for the playing field. 5. Litter Picks for 2024 |
| **23-4/156** | **NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  The next Parish Council meeting would take place on Monday 8 January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Bradwell.  The meeting closed at 8.36pm. |